

MEMOS, FOR TO-MORROW.

News.—French Mail leaves for Ports
Oall and Europe.

1 p.m.—Occidental & Oriental S.S. Co.
Steamer leaves for Yokohama and S.
Francisco.

3 p.m.—Yokusan leaves for Amoy, &c.

3 p.m.—Japan leaves for Singapore,
Peking and Calcutta.

4 p.m.—Canton leaves for Shanghai.

Auctions.

2.30 p.m.—Auction of Sundry House
hold Furniture, &c., at Mr J. I.
Armstrong's.

General Memoranda.

THURSDAY, October 22 :—
Noon.—Meeting of Shareholders of the Canton Insurance Office, Limited, the Company's Office.
2.30 p.m.—Auction Sale of Furniture, Cornaught House, Queen's Road.
5.30 p.m.—Meeting of Diligenta Ltd. Goods per *Glenorchy* undelivered at this date subject to rent.
 Goods per *Orion* undelivered after this date subject to rent.

FRIDAY, October 23 :—
6 p.m.—Meeting of H.K. Football Club.

MONDAY, October 26 :—
9 p.m.—Convocation of Cathy Chapman.

WEDNESDAY, October 28 :—
Noon.—Auction of Sundries at H. Naval Yard.

A. S. WATSON & CO.
LIMITED.

VEGETABLE
— AND —
FLOWER SEEDS

SEASON 1891-92.

PER S.S. SHANGHAI.
W^{HE} HAVE RECEIVED O
SECOND SUPPLIES

OF

Fresh Garden Seeds

and we are now executing all orders the same. Complete Catalogues with precise directions for sowing can be obtained on application or will be posted to any address. In these Catalogues the Seeds Marginally Numbered in English and French, and when ordering it is quite sufficient to state the numbers of the kinds required.

N.B.—All Seeds are tested on arrival before being sent out.

DISCOUNTS.

Orders from one person, of from \$5 to \$10 allowed 25 % discount.

Orders from one person, over \$10 allowed an extra 5 % discount.

NARCISSUS BULBS
(THE CHINESE SPRING FLOWERS).

A Supply just received from the Netherlands. Early application is requested.

CLAY'S FERTILIZER.
A high class fertilizer for pot plants
for use in the garden generally: it sup-
plies natural nourishment to the soil, and
accelerates the process of assimilation, thereby
enabling the plants to attain to their full
vigour and beauty.

Sold in Tins containing 10lb each. . .
" " " " 28lb " " . . .
Directions for use are given on the label.

A. S. WATSON AND CO., LIMITED
THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY
ESTABLISHED A.D. 1841.

DEATHS.

At Shanghai, on the 13th October, EDWIN JOHN GILVIE ROWLAND, age years.—Sydney papers please copy.

At Shanghai, on the 14th October, FRANK ROBERT KLAMPERTZ, age years.

At Shanghai, on the 14th October, CHARLES J. RAWLINSON, aged 42 years.

On the 4th October, at H. M. Consulate Twatuta (Tamsui), of Tamsui fever, ERMES ANNE, dearly loved Wife of W. land.

At Shanghai General Hospital, on 27th September, GRISLAV ADOLF SUZIG, aged 5 years and 4 months.

—The publication of this issue commences at 6.55 p.m.

The China Mail.

HONGKONG, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1897.

ONE is almost inclined to wish that accident that prevented Mr. White's attendance at the last meeting of the Legislative Council had happened two or three months ago when the Opium Bill was first presented, for the accident gave him time to think over the measure and

consider the whole opium policy of Government. And his thinking has to some purpose. He now boldly forward and proposes that we should

don't all connection with the sale of the drug in Hongkong, that we should wipe out bands of a trade that has done more to undo the civilizing influences we exert since than all Chinese ruffians, that has led to the establishment of a power in the Colony equal, if not superior to the Government—a tyrannical power exercised through the lowest of the low, which makes our boasted liberty of the subject hypocritical mockery. Some of Mr. Whitehead's arguments are crude, but the principles he enunciate are unassailable. The time has come for a revolution in the Colony's opium policy. We have long hesitated to express this opinion, because the farming of the prepared opium trade has become so ingrained in the finance administration of Hongkong that to oppose the system seemed like running one's head against a China wall. But now that a member of the Legislative Council has openly proposed the abandonment of the viciously uneconomical policy hitherto pursued and that the Chamber of Commerce actively supports his view, it is no longer possible to keep silence.

The last opium convention with China made a radical change in the position of the port of Hongkong. It practically secured the establishment of a Custom House; for as far as opium is concerned the Import and Export Office has all the duties of a Custom House to perform without the power of levying dues. This infringement of the freedom of the port has often been denounced, but it was a great blessing disguised. It has prepared the way for the reversal of our opium policy. We have endured all the vexatious restrictions of an unprofitable Custom House, and are now prepared for the establishment of a profitable one. Instead of collecting our revenue by the tortuous and costly method of farming out the right to prepare opium—a method which directly associates us with the preparation and sale of the article and which does not yield us more than a half of the money extorted from the people in one way or other—we may now put a duty on raw opium without being accused of destroying the freedom of the port any more than the last convention with China did. The collection of a raw opium duty in Hongkong, now that China has imposed a duty of Ta. 110, ought not to require a costly preventive service. A slight extension of the present Import and Export Office would suffice. The hearty co-operation of the Imperial Maritime Customs might be relied upon. The establishment of bonded warehouses, a project that has often been suggested, would be a natural consequence of this new policy, for evidently only opium to be consumed in Hongkong would be taxed. We believe on the basis of the present opium farmer's daily consumption a duty of Ta. 110—should be the same amount as is collected in China be fixed—upon which would yield a revenue equal to that now derived from the Farm; but even if the turn were one or two lakhs less, there would be a saving of five times the amount to the people, and an extra tax of a less objectionable kind, would be due to fully borne. And then what a moral prevalence it would be! The good name of the colony would be increased fivefold, and any slight loss of revenue might sustain for a year or so would more than compensated by the increasing prosperity of a port, far freer really than it is at the present time. His Excellency brushed aside Mr. Whitehead's letter as irrelevant, as dealing only with matters of principle after the principle of the Bill had been accepted. It is a great pity, we say, that Mr. Whitehead did not meet with his accident 18 months ago; for we are afraid it is late to consider such a momentous proposition on the eve of concluding a new contract and when the enacting opium bills are being passed. Still the subject ought not to be allowed to drop. Our present policy stands condemned on moral and economic grounds. The freedom of the port has already been infringed without any equivalent return, while restrictions for the protection of the monopolist are increasing to the point of becoming unbearable. Colonial Treasurers, even good Lister, get to consider the opium monopoly as immutable as the laws of nature; they are forced to plead with the colony to suffer 'any indignity, to avoid all scruple—because a quarter of our revenue is derived from our abject. There is nothing immutable in our opium policy any more than there is about other evil practices, and the time has come for a radical change. The Chamber of Commerce ought to take up the subject and discuss it in all its bearings. And don't you fear the opposition of Exeter & Messrs Whitehead & Co. are for once on the side of the angels. Exeter & Co. rejoice to find that a British Colony severed its direct connection with a drug trade and had assumed the same trade as the Home Government towards drink traffic—high taxation without participation. There are many incidents and questions that would crop up, such as the advisability of encouraging the export of prepared opium by granting a rebate on them of their present innumerable duties.

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The Editor's Wife—John, dear, I'm going to let you see my new dress. I'm sure it is a perfect-perm. The Relative sent it—Fur, it is the waste-bath of love.—*Widow's Bulletin.*

